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Finance Committee Minutes 09-30-2002

ARLINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE
 MINUTES OF MEETING
 7:30 PM O'NEILL ROOM, Community Safety Building
 9/30/02

ATTENDEES:

Janowitz	Feinleib*		O'Neill*	Mahoney
DeCoursey*	Connors	Simmons*	Morrisette*	
Tosti*	Foskett*	Deyst*	Ronan*	
Piandes	Franclemont*		Olsen*	
DuBois*	Howard*	Fanning*	Tosi*	Kneeland*

- Indicates present

VISITORS: Director of Human Services Patsy Kraemer, Paul Bayer

REPORTS:

a. SYMMES: Foskett, Chair of the Symmes Advisory Committee, using a handout summarized developments over the summer. A consultant, VHB, has been hired and has held 3 well-attended public workshops and a community meeting. VHB has begun to gather required information. The handout includes a schedule of planned events leading to a committee recommendation in December.

b. SCHOOL COMMITTEE: Fanning, Subcommittee Chair, provided September enrollment figures (handout) and pointed out both that there was a 10% kindergarten increase over last year, and there was no dropout between last year's kindergarten and this year's first grade. Over all the school population has increased by 65 (1.5%), not counting SPED.

c. REED'S BROOK: Olsen, Public Works Subcommittee Chair, reported that the project is on schedule. The retention pond hole has been dug. The separately funded Summer Street reconstruction project, however, has not begun and Olsen feels it will be affected by the state funding problem.

d. 3-YEAR BUDGET PROJECTION: Foskett presented a summary spreadsheet linked to detailed department budget projection spread sheets and prepared by the Deputy Town Manager. Deficits of \$7.7m for FY04 and \$10.7m are predicted based on normal staffing, and raises, and State aid at the original level proposed last winter before the tax cut was delayed. The Town would have to make either a 10% cut in services or a pass large (\$16m?) override in order to accommodate these deficits.

e. SPECIAL TOWN MEETING: Tosti provided a draft copy of the Warrant and scheduled a hearing for Wed 10/16. Article 2 will revise the budget to deal with the \$370,000 cherry-sheet reductions over the expected local aid. Kneeland to find a meeting room, post the meeting and notify the members. Foskett to get Retirement Board's position on Article 3.

f. SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE: Tosti provided state reimbursement projections based on Peirce and Dallin reimbursement starting in '08 and Thompson and Stratton starting in '16. The gaps would be filled with BANS [bond anticipation notes]. The debt service would be between \$2 million and \$1 million until 2027. Foskett stated that he believed these projection to be unrealistic.

g. EARLY RETIREMENT PLAN: Foskett provided a summary of the consultant's report previously mailed to all members. Based on the assumptions provided to the consultant by Personnel, there are no savings for the Town. VOTED to

recommend no action to the Board of Selectmen. Unanimous.

h. AFTC CONFERENCE: Foskett recommended the conference, which is scheduled for 11/16 at Holy Cross. The FinCom will pay entry fee.

i. FINCOM VACANCIES: Tosti has good nominees for the 2 vacant positions and expects to have them approved before January. For names, contact him.

ACTIONS:

a. TRANSFER RESERVE FUND TO HUMAN SERVICES: Kraemer provided a handout suggesting several options for funding the Alcohol & Drug Education Program since state funding has been dropped. The longtime director of this program retired in June and would like to work part time at least until next June. Kraemer answered many questions, and the FinCom had a lengthy discussion. A motion for Option 1 for \$31.9m failed to pass, 1 to 11. A motion for no action failed to pass, 6 to 7. VOTED to delay action until funds available in the deferred compensation fund can be determined, 8 to 5. Franclemont to obtain info and email or phone to members before Oct. 16 meeting.

b. TRANSFER RESERVE FUND TO BOARD OF SELECTMEN: \$2,623 requested for a copier that was forgotten in the capital budget. The FinCom believes that in these tight budget times the Reserve Fund should be reserved for more important requests. VOTED no action. Unanimous.

c. TRANSFER TIP FEE STABILIZATION FUND TO COMMUNITY STABILIZATION FUND: The transfer to cover the final payment in FY 02 to NESWC must be approved by the FinCom as well as the Board of Selectmen. VOTED \$176,424.74 be transferred. Unanimous.

d. COMMITTEE REORGANIZATION: Kneeland held an election for FinCom officers. All present officers were re-elected without opposition and unanimously.

Chair: Allan Tosti

Co-chairs: Richard C. Fanning, Charles T. Foskett, Abigail DuBois

Secretary: Peter B Howard

COMMITTEE BUSINESS: These notes follow the order in the chair's written agenda. The actual order was adjusted to accommodate visitors and priorities.

RESERVE FUND BALANCE \$300,000

Peter B. Howard, secretary 10/1/02